annual report 1970

FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 31st

library development commission

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

REPORT

for the

YEAR ENDED MARCH 31

1970

R. D. FERGUSON, Vancouver, *Chairman*
H. M. BOYCE, Vancouver
R. J. CULOS, Burnaby (appointed in January)
MRS. A. P. PARR, New Westminster
W. S. PIPES, Vancouver (retired in January)
E. C. ROPER, Vancouver

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1971

VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, January 21, 1971.

To Colonel the Honourable JOHN R. NICHOLSON, P.C., O.B.E., Q.C., LL.D.,
Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of British Columbia.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR:

The Annual Report of the Library Development Commission for the year ended March 31, 1970 is herewith respectfully submitted.

W. D. BLACK
Provincial Secretary.

VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, January 1971.

The Honourable W. D. Black,
Provincial Secretary, Victoria, British Columbia.

SIR: In accordance with the provisions of the *Public Libraries Act*, I have the honour to submit the Report of the Library Development Commission for the year ended March 31, 1970.

R. L. DAVISON
Director, Library Development Commission

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
April 1, 1969 to March 31, 1970

HEADQUARTERS, VICTORIA

Director: R. L. DAVISON

Staff:

MRS. M. B. STROUTS

MRS. D. L. M. WILLIAMS

FIELD CONSULTANT SERVICE

MISS M. E. LEASK, Victoria
MRS. A. A. SIMPSON, New Westminster

LIBRARY SERVICE

Librarian: MRS. M. J. MITCHELL
Librarian, Adult Services: MISS J. H. BUCHANAN
Catalogue Librarian: MISS M. R. MORLEY
Supervisor, Children's Services: MRS. K. B. MORROW
Supervisor, Travelling Libraries: J. R. HENDERSON

Staff:

MRS. E. E. CURRIER
MISS P. J. DOBBYN
MRS. W. MACDONALD
MISS J. M. MCRAE
MISS L. M. T. OUELLETTE
MISS C. M. SMITH
R. A. STEPHENSON
MISS K. M. TAIT

NORTH CENTRAL BRANCH, PRINCE GEORGE

Branch Librarian: MISS P. E. BOWLBY

Staff:

MRS. J. A. BAECKMANN, *Librarian*
MRS. K. M. BURNETT
MISS E. E. EDWARDS, *Librarian* (resigned June 1969)
MISS J. D. GREENLEY
MISS Y. E. HOUGHTALING
MRS. L. J. STOLBERG

PEACE RIVER BRANCH, DAWSON CREEK

Branch Librarian: W. H. OVEREND

Staff:

MISS S. CONNER, *Librarian*
MISS J. M. CONNELLY
MRS. J. ERICKSON (resigned June 1969)
MRS. J. D. FOSTER
MRS. L. A. KACZOR (resigned June 1969)
MISS L. D. LUNGUL (resigned January 1969)
F. NEUBAUER
MRS. D. M. OLSON
MISS A. L. PRYKE

EAST KOOTENAY BRANCH, CRANBROOK

Branch Librarian: MRS. HELEN GORDON

Staff:

MRS. I. B. MURRELL

MRS. M. A. PENNER

104-04672/

Report of the Library Development Commission for the Year Ended March 31, 1970

THE YEAR IN SUMMARY

The Commission held nine meetings during the year, deliberating on such subjects as a special conference on libraries for Centennial Year, 1971, a new programme for library development, the training course for community librarians, a business reference survey in Prince George, organization of regional service in the Peace River country, co-operation between public libraries and school libraries, the application of quantitative standards for public libraries, a policy statement for larger units of service, Provincial aid for public libraries, publications new and continuing, and a change in membership.

LIBRARIES—VITAL TO TOMORROW'S WORLD!

This is the slogan adopted for the British Columbia Centennial Citizens' Conference on Libraries, to be held in Victoria on Monday, May 3, 1971. In the meantime there is much to be done, and the Commission is pleased to be taking some significant part in the preparations.

First, there was the matter of sponsorship and then money, or vice versa. Acting on behalf of the British Columbia Library Association, the Commission, through the good offices of Mr. L. J. Wallace, Deputy Provincial Secretary and Centennial Chairman, was able to arrange for the conference to be financed as a Centennial event, and to donate the services of Mrs. Alice Simpson, a Commission consultant, as Conference Co-ordinator, effective March 1, 1970. From that date on there has been ceaseless activity in the Commission's New Westminster office.

NEW PLAN FOR LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

As the next step in the Commission's continuing policy to publish long-range plans, it was decided that there should be a *Programme for Library Development*, to be released in 1971 and to be based on accepted recommendations contained in the Vainstein Report, *Public Libraries in British Columbia; a Survey With Recommendations*, published in 1966. It was further agreed that responsibility for the new publication would be undertaken by a committee consisting of a member of the Commission, the Director, the Commission's library consultants, and members-at-large appointed on the recommendation of the British Columbia Library Association. The committee held its first meeting in February 1970. Its last is scheduled for September 1971.

TRAINING PROGRAMME

The training programme for community librarians, announced last year, got off to a successful start in the fall of 1969. Twenty librarians enrolled in the correspondence course, and preparations are now being made for a week-long workshop for these pioneer students in June of this year. The twin carrots of advancement for the librarian and more Provincial support for the library board have had their desired effect.

PRINCE GEORGE SURVEY

Part of the Commission's policy regarding consultants is to offer the services of a leading professional in a specific field of librarianship—someone whose regular work is with an established library. In November 1969 we had the temporary assistance of Miss Aileen Tufts, of the Vancouver Public Library, to determine the feasibility of setting up a special library service to business and industry in the City of Prince George. The resulting recommendation was to plan, not the service envisaged, but an expansion of the general reference service to the public. With this professional advice in hand, the library board is considering the addition of a reference librarian to the staff and an appeal to the Commission for a substantial grant for books, both of which should greatly increase the value of the public library as a municipal investment.

PEACE RIVER REGIONAL SERVICE

Ever since the advent of the regional district as a geographic and fiscal unit on the map of British Columbia, the Commission has been interested in somehow making it the basic unit for the now familiar "larger unit of service." This will be a matter of concern for those producing the new programme for library development, but in the meantime it has seemed logical to follow up a possibility in the Peace River area.

Negotiations have been going on since last July between the Commission and the Board of the Peace River-Liard Regional District, and there is now some hope of offering a higher level of service for all, for which the whole community pays, on a fair-share basis.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND SCHOOLS

Long years of experience have shown that the public library provides an extension of the educational resources so essential in the learning process. Its importance to the school cannot be overstated. This is not to say, however, that the public library should be the responsibility of school authorities or be combined totally with the school library. The Commission mentioned this in its last Annual Report and has since made further study of the literature on the subject, which confirms the Commission's original attitude.

On the related question of housing the public library on school property, the Commission drew up a statement entitled "The School-housed Public Library," enumerating the conditions under which such a library would be approved. This statement was adopted as Commission policy at a regular meeting held on April 23, 1969.

QUANTITATIVE STANDARDS

Following last year's reminder that the standards would become operative on April 1, 1971, the Commission made it even more clear by announcing that the present method of determining grants to public library associations will be discontinued on that date. It will be replaced by a new method, to be worked out on an "earned" basis, that will result in maximum Provincial support for those libraries that have reached the level of service reflected in each of the standards. Those that fall short in any of the standards will earn less than the maximum support, the amount of each grant to be determined by a formula established by the Commission.

LIBRARY SYSTEMS

Application of the new formula means, in fact, that the Library Development Commission will not continue to spend Provincial funds to subsidize a poor service that declines to improve itself. By an extension of this same principle, the Commission will seek to encourage the integration of small, independent library operations into co-operative larger units of service. Believing the action should suit the word, the Commission on March 20, 1970 made the following statement of policy: "On and after the first day of April 1971, any municipal public library or public library association whose municipality, electoral area, or school district is in a position to become part of a larger unit of service and does not join the larger unit shall be ineligible for Provincial aid under the *Public Libraries Act.*"

The aim of the Library Development Commission is to see that the best library service possible is available to the people of British Columbia. It would be highly undesirable to retrogress to the point where the legislative appropriation, which might in future become a very significant amount of money, would be dissipated in grants to a lot of struggling, self-isolated libraries doing only half the job of a properly organized regional system.

PROVINCIAL AID

The legislative appropriation did not expand to an astonishing degree, but it did go up $100,000 over last year, which had produced an increase of $75,000 over the year before. Unfortunately for the Commission, the figure for fiscal 1970/71, recently released, is the same $500,000. However, the economy does need a breather, and there is some hope that after a year the library grants will continue to climb toward the Commission's goal of 20 per cent of total library costs.

PUBLICATIONS

Library Developments, a newsletter for the small library, has gone into its second year of publication, and the Commission has produced the usual number of reports and statistical tables, but the big news of the year has been the appearance of two books—

A Book Pedlar in British Columbia is "a chronicle, not of peddling of books as such, but of peddling public library services that made hundreds of thousands of books available to people all over British Columbia." Its author is C. K. Morison, retired Superintendent of the Public Library Commission, and the book is an account of the places and people he encountered in his travels around the Province.

As We Remember It is really a publication of the School of Librarianship, University of British Columbia, "with the co-operation and assistance of the Library Development Commission." This book is the record of a series of interviews with four of the pioneer librarians of British Columbia—Dr. Helen Gordon Stewart, Miss Margaret Clay, Mrs. Muriel Ffoulkes, and (not surprisingly) Mr. C. K. Morison. A mixture of history and autobiography, it is a unique contribution to the library literature of this Province.

THE COMMISSION

Regrettably, two members reached the nine-year limit of consecutive service—Mr. W. S. Pipes in January and Mrs. A. P. Parr on March 31, the last day of the fiscal year. Mr. R. J. Culos took the place of Mr. Pipes, and it is expected that a successor to Mrs. Parr will be announced early in the new year.

PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

As usual, the calibre of annual reports from the association libraries was uneven, to say the least, and far too many are neglecting that little clause in the Act that says, in its quaint way, "The board shall submit an annual report of its doings to the Commission . . .". Bare statistics are not enough. The library world craves your story.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Buildings were in the news from the larger centres. Burnaby has approved sites for a new headquarters building and two new branches; the District of North Vancouver has completed an addition to its Capilano branch, with a combined headquarters and Lynn Valley branch well under way and new quarters in Deep Cove; Prince George mentions a proposed addition to its nine-year-old building; Prince Rupert, burned out of its former home, is just about ready to build; Quesnel is going after a new library as its Centennial project for 1971; Vancouver is planning two new branches and a new bookmobile; and Victoria opened its second branch library, in the municipality of Esquimalt.

Generally speaking, the annual reports for 1969 paint a bright picture for the municipally operated public libraries, but there is little if any indication that library service is turning any corners or awakening to the changes and demands of the second half of the 20th Century. "Make no small plans" the Canadian Library Association once cried, but we have only half listened.

REGIONAL LIBRARIES

These three systems are still our only completely autonomous "larger units of service" and they continue to improve in use and in the services they offer. The Fraser Valley is now circulating more than 1¾ million books a year, the Island, 1¼ million, and the Okanagan gradually nearing the million mark. The Okanagan is planning to follow the Island into the use of a computer-produced book catalogue. This should bring about a marked improvement in the use of collections in the branches and, if the Island's experience is borne out, a drop in the use of the bookmobile. The Island has embarked on a six-month project to do a complete book inventory of branches, bookmobiles, and headquarters; the Valley is acquiring larger branch premises in several communities, including a new one that brings the total to 27; and all three are going in more heavily for history collections—British Columbia in general, local collections in particular.

REPORTS FROM THE COMMISSION'S BRANCHES

Central Services (Victoria)

Although regular circulation of books to individuals has continued at a high level during the year, the Open Shelf's interlibrary loan service has shown a dramatic increase as a result of the Library Development Commission's policy of encouraging greater use of local facilities. This year we received interlibrary loan requests for 2,872 books, a significant increase over the 1,794 requested in 1968/69. Of this total we were able to supply 1,747 books from our own collection. We borrowed 148 from the Provincial Library, 312 from Victoria Public Library, 222 from the McPherson Library of the University of Victoria, and 23 from other sources. We would like to express our thanks, in a formal way, through this report, for the assistance and co-operation we have received from the three Victoria libraries.

Although we were not able to supply 420 of the titles requested, this figure includes items that for one reason or another are not available from other libraries on inter-library loan.

NORTH-CENTRAL

(Prince George)

The fiscal year ending March 31, 1970 will probably stand out in the collective memory of the staff of the North-Central Branch as one of frustration. This is unfortunate, because many good things happened during the year. The unfortunate part is that most of them happened within the confines of a small warehouse, not in our promised new building, which has not yet materialized.

The good things that happened were many and varied. Some of the highlights:

(1) Burns Lake and Fort St. James library boards report new libraries as Provincial Centennial projects. With the completion of these libraries in 1971, seven of our associations will have had new buildings since 1967. Houston, McBride, Smithers, and Terrace were Canadian Centennial projects. Hazelton's came about as a result of the construction of the much publicized Indian Village, K'San, scheduled to be officially opened this summer. Valemount and Vanderhoof, although in need of additional space, will have to rough it for a while longer.

(2) Our book catalogues, compiled last year, have proven so useful that we will attempt a complete revision annually instead of every five years, as we had originally planned. A subject catalogue for children's nonfiction will be one of our next year's projects.

(3) There have been murmurs about the Fraser-Fort George Regional District Board becoming interested in libraries. So far they are only murmurs, but we are hopeful that soon they may be amplified into one great roar.

(4) Best for the last: Mrs. Judith Baeckmann filled our professional vacancy of six months' standing in December. Mrs. Baeckmann has had regional library experience in Ontario, and is an extremely welcome addition to our staff.

The only really discouraging bit of information to report, apart from our cramped quarters, is that our book budget for next year does not show the increase that would have meant so much at this particular stage of the Province's library development. However, we hope for, and expect, a greater degree of financial assistance when next budget time comes around. We also hope for, and would like to expect, additional staff to further the good cause of library development in north-central British Columbia.

Peace River (Dawson Creek)

If the development of the Peace River Branch over the past few years was shown on a graph, the line representing the year ending in March 1970 would be a slope upward. The slope would be steeper than last year's, but, hopefully, like foothills before a mountain, not as steep as the line for the years to come.

It was thought that the past year might have seen the formation of a regional district library, but more foothills preparation evidently is needed before the progress 'slope steepens. A great deal of what happened during the year, however, did strengthen the links between the area public libraries and the Peace River Branch, and established a good foundation for whatever heights are eventually reached.

The basic plan for a regional district library was changed early in the year and later accepted by all members of the Peace River Associated Libraries group. The change was from a federated to a consolidated system, under the direct control of a regional district library board of management. At year's end the modified proposal had been accepted in principle by the Peace River-Liard Regional District board but was awaiting an alternate method of assessment and a more favorable time to apply it.

During the year, Branch funds were expended to bring all six of the area public libraries up to a minimum standard for reference books. Most Peace libraries are near standard for bookstock, personnel, and service, although in finance and facilities there is considerable room for improvement. The Library Development Commission's guides have been heeded and discussed more than in previous years, and it is likely that this effort toward self-improvement will continue for some time.

As part of its general programme of assistance to area libraries, the Branch, in addition to its help with standards, has had notable success with more tangible aspects of library work, including new shelving and furniture for libraries in Fort St. John, Hudson's Hope, Tomslake, Pouce Coupe, and Dawson Creek, thus making them more efficient and attractive. Branch staff have also weeded many hundreds of books from the shelves of area libraries with a policy of repair, replace, or discard. This housecleaning has also done a great deal to make area libraries more efficient and attractive. And having pointed the way, the Branch, by deciding to accept old and worn-out volumes at exchange time, has encouraged community librarians to continue the weeding process themselves.

Hudson's Hope was the only Peace library to gain new quarters during the year. Perched picturesquely on the banks of the Peace River, the former Red Cross outpost hospital was remodelled into an attractive, bright, little public library, thanks mainly to library board initiative and municipal generosity. It will be the site of the annual meeting and workshop of the Peace River Associated Libraries early in May 1970.

Three hundred miles north of the Peace River Branch is its isolated sub-branch at Fort Nelson. Mrs. Joan Foster became librarian there in August to replace Mrs. Lief Erickson. Branch staff visited the Fort Nelson library a scant three times during the year, but stops were necessarily short; hardly adequate in view of the low frequency of visitation. Distance is still the great enemy of effective communication in northern British Columbia and, as with Cassiar in the remote Interior farther north, more field work is needed to overcome this disadvantage.

However, the community librarians from Fort Nelson and Cassiar attended the October workshop in Dawson Creek on the use of reference materials. Neither was able to come to the spring workshop at Chetwynd, although both the spring and fall workshops were well attended by other area librarians. These workshops are regarded as excellent vehicles for overcoming the distance obstacle and bringing librarians together for mutual benefit.

Allied with workshops for improving public relations and disseminating news of books and libraries is the weekly Branch television programme, *The World of Books*. This presentation, continued through the summer months last year for the first time, has gained a wide audience of children and adults in the Peace area served by the Branch, and much credit is due to assistant librarian Sylvia Conner for her enthusiastic efforts in this field.

Miss Conner's weekly review column, "Talking of Books," has helped to promote new books acquired by the Branch. Near the end of the year it was expanded to include library news written by the Branch librarian.

Film-rental service provided by the Dawson Creek and Fort St. John libraries was cut off during the fall months when the National Film Board changed its distribution policy. The Dawson Creek library, however, was able to continue its audio-visual services on a reduced scale by offering music records and film strips to its patrons. At year's end the proposal from the Dawson Creek library board for a new $150,000 library building for the 1971 Centennial was turned down by City Council because of the probability of tax increase. To unify library service, make Branch stock available for local use, and eliminate the need for a costly new building there were suggestions that the Peace River Branch take over local service on a contract basis with the city.

It is encouraging to know that a third professional librarian will be appointed in June. This will be a big help. As for clerical assistance, increasing work loads have brought about increased use of PRAL funds for wages for part-time aid. Absence of a clerk-stenographer for the two months it took to fill the vacancy caused extra work for Branch staff, but it is noted with satisfaction that the position had been filled at year's end.

Using clerical staff to help man the bookmobile has spread out-of-doors duties around and reduced professional involvement therein. The system seems to have worked well. Bookmobile circulation for the same number of stops as last year (11) showed a 41-per-cent increase, and registration was up by 27 per cent. Circulation from the Branch itself, mostly mail service, increased by 58 per cent over last year's total.

Because the quality of school libraries in the Peace area has improved so greatly over the past few years, it may soon be time to re-examine the role and value of collections of children's books in relatively small public libraries. With book prices on the increase and local library funds approaching ceiling levels, it might be appropriate to reduce the purchase of children's books for public library use and let school libraries assume a greater role in the provision of such books for young readers.

On the subject of distance and communication, mentioned earlier, it is recommended that the professional staff of the various branches and divisions of the Library Development Commission meet more frequently to discuss matters of mutual interest. There could be more liaison between branches, which would mean branch and headquarters personnel would be working with greater knowledge of each other's activities.

The year ending in March 1970 was a gradual ascent, but bigger, better, and higher achievements likely lie ahead.

East Kootenay (Cranbrook)

Our population increase, which we had hoped would stabilize, continues in the southern service area, where large trailer courts have been established for construction workers and permanent residents. This has placed a heavy financial burden on all civic tax-supported services, including public libraries, since the trailer residents pay no direct taxes, and a heavy load has been placed on library book service in our area. Our direct mail service rose 200 per cent in one year, and this increase alone has placed an additional heavy work load on our headquarters staff.

Exchanges to our seven public library associations increased in book volume, while interlibrary loans increased over 300 per cent from last year's figures and are steadily rising. Considering the fact that many of these books must be obtained from outside our service, and are of a technical nature, the importance of this library service cannot be over-emphasized. Our member libraries have increased and upgraded their services, and these advances have in turn stimulated the steadily

rising level of demand from library patrons. East Kootenay Branch has stocked French, Italian, and German language books since 1961. Now, due to the high cost of maintaining sufficient non-English bookstock for a limited number of users, we will have to discontinue renting and purchasing Italian and German books, but our French-language collection of adults' and children's books will remain intact and be updated.

Our boards have been working to achieve the quantitative standards, but the feeling generally has been that to develop comprehensive long-range plans will require greater local financial support. When the councils concerned accept library budgets that are meaningful to local library administrators, then and only then progress will result. Local library boards are the electric link between the effectiveness or failure of a good library programme. The board's interpretation of the standards to its municipal council and its community will either light up the land or blow the fuse. The fact that standards have been formulated on the evidence of existing and generally admired programmes must be the local library board's talisman. The hard-core facts call for decision and action now, with each community involved in library service programming its resources and activities for the ensuing year to reach specific objectives.

Inventories by the various librarians in our public libraries over the past year have revealed that book theft is becoming a problem, and as yet no remedy has been devised for this plague. It is interesting that the difference in media produces different standards in different areas: take a television set and it is stealing, but take a book and it is considered "borrowing."

Invermere Public Library has moved to its new quarters in the Invermere Community Centre. Credit for their new home must be given to the energetic board and their hard-working librarian who carried the right message to the Village Council. Invermere will soon, with the addition of a few more books, meet the standards quite handily.

Cranbrook Public Library Board is down to the drawing-board and location stage of its projected library, and as one board member remarked, "Thank goodness this is a one-time thing, because never have so many obstacles been placed in the path of one board attempting to get going with a civic project."

Community librarians attended a workshop sponsored by the British Columbia Teachers' Federation and heard various educators and library professors on the subject of the library as a living resource centre.

Co-operation has been our watchword during the past year, and it has made our work more pleasant for all and produced results in bringing better library service to the East Kootenays.

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION EXPENDITURE, APRIL 1, 1969 TO MARCH 31, 1970

Salaries	$186,707
Office expense, equipment, supplies	10,555
Travelling expense (staff and vehicles)	10,906
Printing and publications	2,950
Books, binding, periodicals	82,972
Transportation	1,725
Extension services	6,568
Freight and express	5,576
Total	$307,959

Grants to libraries and library associations, $499,963.

THE COMMISSION'S LIBRARY SERVICE, APRIL 1, 1969 TO MARCH 31, 1970

I. Open Shelf

	Headquarters (Victoria)	North-Central (Prince George)	Peace River (Dawson Creek)				East Kootenay	Grand Total
			Headquarters	Book-mobile	Fort Nelson	Total		
Circulation								
Adult	37,680	7,483	2,705	4,955	6,410	14,070	881	60,114
Juvenile	36,836	2,284	2,767	5,412	4,609	12,788	1,216	53,124
Totals	74,516	9,767	5,472	10,367	11,019	26,858	2,097	113,238
Last year	77,731	7,478	3,458	7,348	13,299	24,105	739	110,053
Borrowers Registered								
Adult	5,319	620	25	142	155	322	99	6,360
Juvenile	3,866	267	61	189	103	353	103	4,589
Totals	9,185[1]	887	86	331	258	675	202	10,949
Last year	16,843	688	123	260	211	594	62	18,187
Bookstock (Open Shelf and Travelling Libraries)								
Total Volumes—								
Adult	81,845	47,092			55,831		22,639	207,407
Juvenile	45,622	25,979			21,039		20,218	112,858
Totals	127,467	73,071			76,870		42,857	320,265
Last year—								
Adult	79,258	41,263			53,748		20,980	195,249
Juvenile	45,539	23,300			19,631		19,068	107,538
Totals	124,797	64,563			73,379		40,048	302,787

[1] Result of triennial reregistration. Nonactive cards removed.

THE COMMISSION'S LIBRARY SERVICE, APRIL 1, 1969 TO MARCH 31, 1970—*Continued*

II. Travelling Libraries

Delivered to—	Headquarters (Victoria)	North-Central (Prince George)	Peace River (Dawson Creek)	East Kootenay (Cranbrook)	Grand Total
Public Library Associations—					
Collections	42	46	71	385	544
Volumes	6,600	7,963	10,168	14,909	39,640
Communities—					
Collections	240	71	98	66	475
Volumes	25,979	18,453	8,316	6,591	59,339
Total—					
Collections	282	117	169	451	1,019
Volumes	32,579	26,416	18,484	21,500	98,979
Last year—					
Collections	282	112	107	468	969
Volumes	32,641	22,929	22,892	20,751	99,213

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